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Action

Professional Practices Committee

Committee of Credentials: Expiration of Terms and Declaration of Vacancies

Executive Summary: The Professional Practices Committee will review the availability of incumbents for re-appointment to the Committee of Credentials and make its determinations as to which of the positions with expiring terms shall be declared vacant as of March 14, 2007 and June 30, 2007. The Committee will direct staff as to how to proceed to assist the Commission, as necessary, with the selection of new Committee of Credentials members.

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Commission reappoint Dr. Wesley Apker, Dr. Sylvia Whitlock, and Mr. Martin Ledesma to additional two year terms on the Committee of Credentials, and appoint Dr. Duane Stiff, Ms. Gray's alternate, as the school board member for a two-year term effective December 1, 2006.

Presenter: Mary Armstrong, Director,
Division of Professional Practices

Strategic Plan Goal(s): 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.

- ◆ Evaluate and monitor the moral fitness of credential applicants and holders and take appropriate action.

November-December 2006

Committee of Credentials: Expiration of Terms and Declaration of Vacancies

Introduction

The Committee will determine will review the availability of incumbents for re-appointment to the Committee of Credentials and make its determination as to which, if any, of the positions with expiring terms shall be declared vacant as of March 14, 2007 and June 30, 2007.

Background

The obligations of the Professional Practices Committee and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing relative to the Committee of Credentials are set forth in the Commission's Policy Manual. [Please see CTC Policy Manual sections 500.] This item summarizes those obligations and presents information concerning the vacancy, application and selection process.

Fiscal Impact

The vacancy, application and selection process for the Committee of Credentials will result in no appreciable increase in divisional expenditures. The costs associated with this recurring procedure are included annually in the Division's budget. These costs include printing and postage relative to the distribution of applications and travel and lodging expenses for individuals invited to interview.

The Process

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee of Credentials review individuals for fitness to receive and/or retain credentials. In addition, the Commission distributes information regarding the actions taken by it to all public and private schools and school districts in California and every other state in the nation.

The Committee of Credentials is required by law to investigate all allegations of misconduct against credential applicants and holders. It is comprised of seven members, appointed by the Commission and consists of one elementary teacher, one secondary teacher, one school board member, one school administrator, and three public representatives.

The Committee of Credentials meets three days each month at the offices of the Division of Professional Practices in Sacramento. Members review more than 600 cases at various stages of review each month.

The Commission's Professional Practices Committee is responsible for informing "the Commission when vacancies occur or may be expected to occur on the Committee of Credentials." [CTC Policy Manual, section 500] *The term of one (1) member of the*

Committee of Credentials expires on March 14, 2007 and the terms of three (3) members expire on June 30, 2007. These include one (1) school board member, one (1) secondary teacher, and two (2) public representatives. The current incumbents in these positions are Dr. Wesley Apker (public representative), Dr. Sylvia Whitlock (public representative), Martin Ledesma (secondary teacher), and Sharon Gray (school board member). The schedule set forth below outlines the actions necessary in order to meet the appointment responsibility in a timely manner:

December	Vacancies are announced and applications are sent to the state printer. Applications and press releases are distributed throughout the state. Nominations are solicited.
February	Set February 1, 2007 deadline date for receipt of applications. Paper-screening by the Professional Practices Committee.
April	Interviews are conducted and appointments are made by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The Commission's Policy Manual states that "Prior to publicly announcing a vacancy, the Committee shall inquire, in writing, as to the availability of incumbents to serve an additional term" [CTC Policy Manual, section 500(a)]. The current Policy Manual also provides that no member shall serve more than two successive two-year terms [CTC Policy Manual 503(a)]; however, the past practice of the Commission has been to waive the term limit requirement. Pursuant to this provision, unless it is waived by the Commission, Dr. Wesley Apker, and Dr. Sylvia Whitlock are ineligible to serve an additional term since they have both served three successive two-year terms. In recent years the Committee has experienced a great deal of turnover due to resignations by members during their terms. Currently, Dr. Apker and Dr. Whitlock are the most experienced members serving on the Committee. This experience has proved essential to the effectiveness of the Committee as the new members become familiar with the process. For these reasons, staff recommends that the Commission once again suspend section 503(a) of the Policy Manual and allow Dr. Apker, Dr. Whitlock, and Martin Ledesma to serve additional two-year terms. An inquiry regarding the availability of all the incumbent members was sent in August and September 2006. All expressed an interest and desire to serve another term; however, due to her recent election loss, Ms. Gray is no longer eligible to serve on the Committee of Credentials as the school board member. The designated alternate to Ms. Gray is Dr. Duane Stiff, a school board member from Capistrano Unified School District. Staff contacted Dr. Stiff regarding his availability. He indicated he is available to begin serving immediately.

Recommendation

Reappoint Dr. Wesley Apker, Dr. Sylvia Whitlock, and Mr. Martin Ledesma to additional two year terms on the Committee of Credentials, and appoint Dr. Duane Stiff, Ms. Gray's alternate, as the school board member for a two-year term effective December 1, 2006.